RAJYA SABHA

Friday, the 31st August, 2007/9 Bhadrapada, 1929 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,
MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 261 ...*(Interruptions)*... This is Question Hour. ...*(Interruptions)*... Question No. 261. ...*(Interruptions)*... Question No. 262. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री दिग्विजय सिंह: सर, हमने नोटिस दिया हुआ था... ...**(व्यवधान)**... Sir, what has happened to my notice?...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री एस.एस. अहलुवालिया: सर, प्रश्न-काल स्थगित कीजिए और ...**(व्यवधान)**...

प्रो. राम देव भंडारी: सर, क्वेश्चन ऑवर चलाइए। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 263 ...*(Interruptions)*... Please go back to your seats. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please go back to your seats. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please go back to your places. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please go back to you seats. ...*(Interruptions)*... The House is adjourned till 12 o' clock.

The House then adjourned at three minutes past eleven of the clock.

The House re-assembled at twelve of the clock,

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

High speed trains

*261. DR. K. KESHAVA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry is considering to introduce high speed trains which would run at the speed of 350 kilometre per hour across the country;

(b) if so, the details of the routes and names of the States which have expressed interest in the high speed lines;

(c) whether any request has been received from the Government of Andhra Pradesh in this regard;

(d) if so, the response of his Ministry; and

(e) by when the proposal would be taken up?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal have expressed their interest in high speed trains and have agreed 'in principle' to participate in any pre-feasibility studies. The routes suggested by the State Governments are:

MAHARASHTRA:

(i) Mumbai–Ahmedabad – 500 Km. (approx.)

(ii) Mumbai–Nasik – 185 Km. (approx.)

(iii) Mumbai–Pune – 165 Km. (approx.)

(iv) Pune–Nasik – 202 Km. (approx.)

KARNATAKA:

(i) Bangalore–Hubli – 405 Km. (approx.)

(ii) Bangalore–Mysore – 139 Km. (approx.)

TAMIL NADU:

(i) Chennai–Madurai – 444 Km. (approx.)

(ii) Chennai–Coimbatore – 491 Km. (approx.)

GUJARAT:

(i) Mumbai–Ahmedabad – 500 Km. (approx.)

DELHI, HARYANA AND PUNJAB:

(i) Delhi-Chandigarh-Amritsar – 450 Km. (approx.)

ANDHRA PRADESH:

(i) Hyderabad – Dornakal-Visakhapatnam – 650 Km. (approx.)

(ii) Hyderabad–Dornakal–Vijayawada – 270 Km. (approx.)

(iii) Vijayawada – Chennai – 396 Km. (approx.)

(iv) Vijayawada–Visakhapatnam – 382 Km. (approx.)

(v) Hyderabad – Bangalore – 562 Km. (approx.)

WEST BENGAL:

(i) Howrah – Haldia – 135 Km. (approx.)

(ii) Sealdah – Kalyani – 55 Km. (approx.)

(c) to (e) The routes suggested by Government of Andhbra Pradesh will be kept in view before finalising the corridors for undertaking a pre-feasibility study. Action will be taken to conduct pre-feasibility studies in consultation with State Governments. The proposal is in its initial stages and will be taken up after arrangement of the required resources.

Failure of PDS

*262. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of wheat, rice, sugar, kerosene, etc. fixed per person per BPL/ APL card, through PDS;

(b) whether it is sufficient;

(c) the details of malpractices in PDS;

(d) the cases detected/registered and their disposal during the last three years;

(e) how many ration dealers were sentenced with imprisonment for misappropriation/selling/diverting the items in open market, during the last three years, year-wise;

(f) the measures taken by Government to check the malpractices;

(g) Government's nine point action plan for tackling diversion of PDS items and its implementation; and

(h) whether PDS has failed in the country?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), eligible families/households are issued ration cards by State Governments and UT administrations. The TPDS is supplemental in nature. Allocation of rice and wheat under TPDS is being made by Government of India to meet approximately half of monthly food grains (cereals) requirement of a household. Therefore, this allocation is being made @ 35 kg rice and wheat per family/household per month for the AAY and BPL categories. For the Above Poverty Line (APL) cardholders, the allocation of rice and wheat is made depending upon their availability in the Central Pool.

From 01.02.2001, allocation of levy sugar to States/Union Territories is being made only for BPL families, except for NE States, hilly States and island territories for which the allocation is being made for coverage of BPL as well as APL families.

The allocation of TPDS kerosene is being made to States and UTs on historical basis for the purpose of cooking and illumination only. Allocation of annual quota of TPDS kerosene is being made by the Government to States and UTs on